DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 335 796 EA 023 291

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TITLE The Multiple Realities of Curriculum Policy Making.
PUB DATE Apr 91
NOTE 23p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (Chicago, IL, April 3-7, 1991).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Curriculum Design; Definitions; *Educational Policy; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; *Policy Formation; *Political Influences; *Social Influences; Theory Practice Relationship
IDENTIFIERS *Europe; *Germany

ABSTRACT

Concerning curriculum making, it is impossible to integrate the different meanings of "curriculum" into a single formula. Read as social constructions, different conceptions reflect varying educational, social-political, and historical contexts. This paper explores how these contexts, or multiple realities, evolved historically and how they shape current curriculum-making practices. The first part sketches three basic features (compartmentalization, licensing, and segmentation) of curriculum making's social process as they have emerged in Prussia and in most other Central and Northern European countries since 1800. Part 2 shows how these features have shaped the current system of curriculum and education policy making in Germany, stressing the present conditions of curriculum design within administration, some aspects of curriculum committees' working routine, the related system of organized public deliberation, and the status of syllabi at the classroom level. Because of a compartmentalized system, any nationwide subject matter is laid down in at least as many syllabi as there are states in the Federal Republic of Germany. Segmented deliberation grants personal access to curriculum commissions to education professionals only, confining the general public to generalized debate. Also, classroom syllabi lag behind everyday experience. (58 references) (MLH)

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THE MULTIPLE REALITIES OF CURRICULUM POLICY MAKING

PAPER PRESENTED TO THE SYMPOSIUM ON

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON CURRICULUM HISTORY: THE SOCIAL SYSTEM OF CURRICULUM POLICY AND REFORM

AT THE 1991 AERA ANNUAL MEETING
IN CHICAGO, APRIL 1991

EA 023 291

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Writing about curriculum, curriculum making, curriculum administration or anything else related to curriculum, requires a preceding statement explaining the underlying conceptions. By the very nature of curriculum making it is, however, basically impossible to integrate the different meanings of the label "curriculum" into a single formula. Read as social constructions, different conceptions reflect varying educational, social, political, historical, etc. contexts (cf. summarizing Tanner & Tanner 1980; Goodson 1988; Cornbleth 1990; Gundem 1990a; Haft & Hopmann 1990a).

Normally, a written curriculum contains a more or less explicite selection of contents combined with some remarks concerning the use and/or the usefulness of those contents. Thus seen, curricula instruct about what may or will be instructed. However, this is but one function of a curriculum, under certain conditions not even the most important one. A curriculum may also be a symbol of political action, a step in a teacher's, a scientist's or an administrator's career, an experiment, an instrument to regulate quarrels or a treaty between administrations, politicians and parents. Curricula can be studied as documents of social control, of educational sense or of historical meaning. They may indicate personal intentions as well as structural constraints or otherwise intervening conditions. Which of a curriculum's many contents, functions, conditions, and impacts prevail against the others is not determined by the acts and facts alone, but depends on who is looking at the curriculum, making sense of it or of the processes involved.

The main focus of the following paper is the question, how these multiple realities (as named by Alfred Schütz) evolved historically and how they shape curriculum making[1] nowadays. For that purpose, I will sketch three basic features of the social process of making a curriculum as they have emerged in Prussia and in most of the other Central and Northern European countries since around 1800: compartmentalization (I.1), licensing (I.2), and segmentation (1.3). In a second part I will try to outline how these features have shaped the current system of curriculum and educational policy making in Germany, addressing the present conditions of curriculum making within administration (II.1), some aspects of the working routine of curriculum committees (II.2), the related system of organized public deliberation (II.3), and the status of syllabi at the classroom level (II.4).

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[1] As there is no direct translation of the underlying German term Lehrplanarbeit and its contextual meaning, I had to make some technical conceptual differentiation: In the following, the term curriculum development refers to the social process of constructing a written curriculum, curriculum implementation to the use made of a written curriculum as soon as it is enacted. The more encompassing term curriculum making refers to any part of both the development and the implementation of a curriculum in public schooling.

A caveat is necessary in advance: It refers to the limits of the outline. They are set by the historical and empirical research I have done.[2] It is concentrated on the history and structure of curriculum making in general education, that is concerning primary and compulsory secondary education and excluding special and vocational education. If not explicitly stated otherwise, data used in the following sections are taken from a comprehensive survey I made between 1984 and 1988 (summarized in Hopmann 1988).[3] Moreover, I would like to stress that even though some data (like the variety of compartments or the number of persons, organizations and agencies involved) may give the impression of a very unique complexity, most findings are compatible with those reported from other German speaking and most of the Western European and Scandinavian countries (cf. e.g. Nissen, Teschner & Haft 1978; Bund-Länder-Kommission 1984; Lundgren, Svingby & Wallin 1984; Englund 1986; Gundem 1988, 1990b; Bruggen 1989; Haft & Hopmann 1990a; Hopmann 1990).

Based on a functional analysis of the structure of curriculum making as symbolic action (cf. Haft & Hopmann 1990b), I am convinced that any large-scale system of curriculum making must have at least structural eqivalents serving the same functions as the different mechanism of curriculum making outlined in the following sections. It is quite natural that the functional "atrocities" implied are not always reflected by official or public statements of curriculum managers, politicians, scientists, teachers etc.: Those involved do not like a perspective reducing their seemingly pedagogical efforts to multiple realities of "mere" administration. Being involved myself, I inevitably share the romantic anachronism that curriculum making somehow should be more educational, child-centered, spontaneous and less administrative, policy-oriented, organized. However, almost everyone I have met in curriculum affairs, those confined to state-run curriculum productions as well as those working in a freelance or academic position, they all admitted privately, that their curriculum making was not very different from the experience described below.

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[2] I had the privilege to do most of the reported research in cooperation with Karl Frey, Henning Haft, Kurt Riquarts and others in a project named "Prozessanalyse der Lehplan- und Curriculumentwicklung in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland", based at the Institute for Science Education (IPN) at the University of Kiel (cf. Haft, Hopmann, Frey, Mackert, Menck & Westphalen 1986; Haft & Hopmann 1987a, 1987b; Hopmann 1988a, 1988b; Haft & Hopmann 1989;, Hopmann, Haft & Frey 1989; Haft & Hopmann 1990a; Hopmann/Haft 1990). Especially the unfolding of the theoretical framework used here would not have been possible without the invaluable support by my friend and academic teacher Henning Haft (1942 - 1990).

[3] Most data stem from the eleven states of the former Federal Republic as it was until October 1990. The former GDR had a somewhat different, but in its basic structures comparable system of curriculum making (cf. Waterkamp 1989) and the five new states emerging from the unification process are expected to copy the traditional German pattern. The communalities of both systems are based on the fact that both, the former GDR as well as the Federal Republic, were following Prussian traditions in their respective administrative systems.

I. A Short History of Curriculum Making in Germany

State-run curriculum development, as it prevails in Germany and a lot of surrounding countries, is an invention of the late 18th and early 19th century. The French revolution and the following wars set off a complete realignment of national and social borders in Central Europe. New, disintegrating, or displaced states had to find ways and means strong enough to enforce national amalgamation and to restore their decision making capacities. For this purpose they turned almost naturally to administration as one of the most powerful means to install or regain leadership in a crisis. The challenge raised by the realignment in the early 19th century reflected an enormous acceleration in the speed of economical und cultural change (cf. Koselleck 1973). If the built-in modernization process was not to destroy the already weakened social system, a far reaching system of administrative control was neccessary (cf. Wunder 1986; Wehler 1987), especially if poorly constructed, unevenly distributed social organizations like elementary and higher education were to be included. This task was given to the newly established Prussian educational administration in 1809 (cf. Koselleck 1967; Leschinsky & Roeder 1983).

I.1 Compartmentalization

It was not the first time in Prussian history that parts of the educational administration had been separated into a specialized department (cf. Heinemann 1974). But other than preceding assessment agencies, which held responsibilities in distinct areas of educational control only (e.g. university access), the newly established department was in charge of almost all organized schooling (especially excluding military education). It was expected to strengthen the up to then not very impressive record of state control, which, at the end of the 18th century, the Prussian secretary of education, Zedlitz, had called a simple "mime for the public".

However, money was - as usual - lacking to pay for a thorough modernization of a rotten system and the political leadership was by far not centralized enough to implement whatever policy it found suitable. Other means were necessary to force traditional school authorities to cooperate. The one and only administrative concept to tackle a problem which cannot be solved as a whole is to tear it up into pieces, formally spoken: to <u>differentiate</u>. In Prussia, a last effort to introduce a comprehensive law of schooling failed in the 1820's. Instead, the process of segmenting school law into distinct sections,

which had already gathered momentum from the confirmation and matriculation regulations of the 18th century, produced a compartmentalized system of school legislation. Unable to enact an all-embracing school law, the reform program fell apart into a series of distinct regulations for examinations, promotions, matriculation, teacher training, secondary education, etc. In short, all conceivable areas of curricular organization were successively regulated on their own. A side-effect of this differentiation was the modern concept of a written curriculum, the syllabus, as a guideline for centralized decision making concerning the local selection of topics to be taught.

In this system, the syllabus was not meant as an organizing tool of instruction, but as an instrument of administrative supervision. The first Prussian syllabus, the "Normalplan" of 1816, was explicitly constructed in this manner (cf. Lohmann 1984). Each school had to submit its local syllabus to get it checked against the official guideline. At the end of the 19th century, the local written plan shrank to a content-free time-table, and later on even that requirement was lost. Since then, the administration has simply proceeded on the basis of the assumption that anyone's instruction followed the given guidelines - unless officially stated otherwise.

The idea behind this, that it makes sense to regulate schooling by topic-control, was not as self-evident as it may seem today. It opposed the contemporary search for a natural system of education by declaring the content of instruction a matter of choice. As a result, the tasks and boundaries of schooling could no longer be legitimated in an one-dimensional approach, by the order of knowledge or the nature of a method, as had been conventional educational wisdom until then (cf. Künzli 1986). Instead one could argue with the practical necessities of different school levels and subjects. The Prussian administration followed this route when it composed the very first curriculum commission in 1809/16 (preparing the Normalplan) by a careful blending of leading specialists, each representing a single subject matter area from classical languages to mathematics and science (cf. Lohmann 1984).

This kind of compartmentalization has had more impact on curriculum history than any curriculum theory or political movement. Based on it, any curriculum approach of a comprehensive kind had no chance of survival in the long run. Indifferent to the special brand of its educational or political credo, an integrated approach could not exist alongside the prevailing system of school subjects, which had come to be the most effective means of translating the social division of reasoning into an administrative logic of contents. And it did not fit into a fragmented system of planning levels, which could not be bound to common principles of content-choice. On the other hand, such a compart-

mentalized structure allowed for new concepts to be at least partially adopted, provided borders between regulation levels and disciplines were not blurred.

For the administration, the practical returns of the ongoing differentiation served a double purpose. The first advantage of compartmentalization lay in the clear framework of reasoning. From then on, curriculum issues were subject-bound matter of limited scope. There was no discussion about the purposes of schooling as a whole, but narrowly defined issues at stake, such as whether elementary science should start in the second or the third grade. Such detailed questions were clear-cut questions for experts, and not for the general public. At least the Prussian administration argued this way in the 1820's and 1830's: Any intervention in the process of curriculum making was rebuffed with the argument: for experts only. A second advantage became important in the long run. In a compartmentalized system no one can be held responsible for the whole. Following the separation of curriculum making from all other decisions about school principles and local implementation, there is simply no place left, where the system as a whole is available to public visibility. Proposals to change more than particular parts of the curriculum could thus almost always be rejected with reference to other levels of regulation (such as laws, examination rules, or timetables) or the peculiar requirements of local implementation. On the other hand, any impact of non-curricular regulations could always be delimited or counter-acted by independent curriculum administration. Thus, compartmentalization was probably the decisive advantage the Prussian system of curriculum making had compared to contemporary patterns, and which explains why almost all Central European states adopted the model until the turn of the century.[4]

I.2 Licensing

The double-faced task of state controlled modernization - avoiding political by evolving economical change - could only be reached if it was possible to limit the resulting range of social unrest by schooling or other instruments of social control. The conception of schooling as a means of social control was the notion that changed conservative governments like the Prussian to zealous

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[4] This especially holds true compared to the competing system of curriculum administration by normal schools as it had been created by Felbiger in Silesia and Austria in the second half of the 18th century and which now, in the early 19th century, gained new grounds promoted by the monitorial movement (cf. Hopmann 1990a).

supporters of elementary education (cf. Nipperdey 1977; Baumgart 1989). On the other hand that meant that the teachers had to be blamed for any unrest, as that during the 1848's, because they evidently had not done enough to keep the people quiet. At least, that was what the Prussian king said in public in the aftermath of the '48 revolution, calling the teachers masters of "asshole-education" and other normally unquotable names. The parliament tried to pass the responsibility for the failures on to the national curriculum administration and thereby seize curriculum control. But the system of compartmentalized regulations held. All the parliamentarians could achieve was a new step of differentiation, namely the right to decree general rules of schooling which certainly should not intervene in the process of administrative arranged curriculum making.

What kept the curriculum administration of the 1850's out of the reach of parliamentary criticism was another special feature of curriculum making created in the early years of Prussian curriculum administration: the separation of instruction planning at school or classroom level from state-run curriculum making. Modeled upon other areas of administration (curriculum administration can be described as a blue-print of the trade law), this separation can be called a kind of licensing.

Licensing is a conventional administrative mechanism whereby planning authority or supervision is disengaged from executive responsibility. It includes the assignment of unspecified, yet far-reaching functional authority provided that certain rules (especially those of access) are maintained. Everyday examples are given by the driving license or the license to operate a certain business. Practically, the Prussian educational administration referred to licensing when talking about the freedom to choose instructional methods. A teacher could be made to choose among prescribed contents, but not - if an approved teacher - to follow a certain method of instruction. Explicitly formulated in a draft version of a school law in 1819 for the first time, this principle had already been circumscribed in a number of curricular documents since the 1780's.

The fundamental turn-around implied in the freedom of instruction can hardly being overestimated. Up to the late 18th and early 19th century the method was seen as the key to any educational success and planning: the choice of content had to follow the methodological decisions (cf. Hopmann 1991). The central argument on behalf of monitorial or Pestalozzian instruction was the value of the method and not that of its contents. Now the postponement of the method reduced it legally to a practical art of instructional presentation. The linkage between content and method was not simply denied, but sequencialized and randomized: Contents could be chosen without predisposing the conditions

of implementation, methods applied without settling arguments about the content of schooling.

The explicit differentiation between substance and method allowed a useful division of responsibilities. In case of failure nobody could decide whether the content or its presentation was to blame. As long as there was a consistent system of reference, both administrators and teachers could benefit from the resulting separation of planning and execution. Without it, taking the syllabus as binding for what happened in classrooms, the administration would have been responsible not only for the legitimation of its intentions but also for whatever should result from instruction. Based on it, the administration could use the licensing principle as an argument any time it got critizised because of schooling effects. In the 1830's and 1840's it could blame the teachers for the much discussed "overburdening" of the students. Nothing else happened in the late 1840's and the 1880's, periods of social and political unrest: who else other than the teachers had failed to implant the prescribed loyalty? The argument returned at the beginning of our century, in the last years of monarchy, and later on during the illness of the Weimar republic. Even the Nazis used the licensing principle to legitimate their political indoctrination in spite of counteracting syllabi. At any time teachers were responsible for any impact of schooling syllabi did not explicitly prescribe.

Even though it created a lot of public blame, this deliberation game had a strong foothold in the teachers' own interest. They needed a framework as a ground for appeal to fall back on in case of contention. State frameworks allowed them more leeway than any local control could. Once they had a syllabus in their hands, all they had to do in case of dissent was to show that the framework covered their activities. This was the reason why teachers, during the 19th century and especially during the revolution of 1848, fought for the expansion of state-run curriculum work. Moreover, the approved local responsibility and the related methodological qualifications were the most important tools in creating professional standards. A teacher was to be distinguished from a non-teacher by his methodological abilities to handle whatever content required - and in any single case not to be measured by the uncertain outcomes of his instruction which might have other causes (cf. ibid.).

Most of the professionalization efforts in elementary schooling and of the educational literature in 19th century Prussia concentrated on those technical standards of instruction which could be generalized as necessary components

of any professionalized education (cf. Oelkers 1989). Accordingly, educational theory expanded its institutionalized career in German seminars not as a philosophy or psychology of education (as one would expect from the theoretical viewpoints laid down by Herbart, Schleiermacher etc.), but as a technical discipline. As a peculiar "science of schooling" it was officially acknowledged by the first comprehensive elementary teacher education act in Prussia, the "Stiehlsche Regulative" of 1854. Starting in the 1820's, the state accepted this linkage indirectly in the area of higher education, too, by making the teaching license dependent on a year of practical experience in which a candidate had to prove his practical insight.

Naturally, the teacher-centered science of schooling did not stop at the boundaries of methodological issues. In curriculum deliberation the teacher used precisely the space given by the licensing principle: They were responsible for presenting the curriculum by professional standards - so it had to be guaranteed that the content of the curriculum did not counteract those standards. This met with a growing administrative interest to prove professional ability and to limit the scope of local variation without abolishing the idea of licensing. Both interests contributed to the emergence of a specialized curriculum science - the didactics. The overwhelming success of Herbartian didactics in the second half of the 19th century as well as the following one of reform pedagogical didactics (as developed especially by Weniger) owed much of its momentum to the fact that both professional sides in the curriculum deliberation game, administrators and school practioners alike, needed a frame of reference which could bridge the gap between general planning and local instruction by giving rules of curriculum explanation - at least in a manner which could keep the other factions quiet.

I.3. Segmentation

Teachers were but one social group that demanded more influence on the process of curriculum making. After 1848 the Prussian administration found itself amidst lasting attacks and counterattacks led by politicians, employer associations and other pressure groups, social institutions like the army and the churches, newspapers, scientists, etc. As a parliamentarian put it: curriculum making seemed to be too important to be left to the administration alone (cf. Berg 1973). The remedy the administration resorted to was successive segmentation of the levels of discourse. Beginning in 1849, it established conferences and other forums of preliminary discussion of educational policies, which

would give all potentially interfering groups an opportunity to take part in curriculum policy making (cf. Tenorth 1988).

A combination of political and educational deliberation, as intended in the first conferences until the 1870's, proved to be counterproductive. The different factions and intentions did not paralyse each other, as some inside the administration had probably hoped, but produced almost uncontrollable coalitions across professional and political borders, united in a shared front against administration. Therefore, the next step had to be a subsequent segmentation of the political and the educational discourse by constructing different arenas for anyone asking for a share. Politics and education should not penetrate each other in public. The teachers and their scientists had to leave the school conferences. Since 1890, these were reduced to a kind of political brainstorming on educational principles. The conferences on the other hand lost the competence to decide or even delimitate curriculum issues. Those should - as the conference of 1900 recommended - be directly negotiated between the administration and school practioners in specialized, subject-matter bound commissions. A classical model of organizing a segmented discourse was provided by the Prussian reform of the secondary curriculum in 1925 (cf. Müller-Rolli 1985). It was preceeded by an intensely controversial memorandum about the task of higher education. Public criticism was rebuffed with reference first to the curriculum planning which had been excluded from the discussion: all criticized issues would be taken in account then... However, later on, the lasting criticism was rebuffed with reference to the already terminated discussion about the memorandum: There would have been the place to... The preliminary negotiations about the memorandum, as a "provisional" assessment of key concepts, thus relieved the subsequent planning process of the obligation to take account of the more fundamental public debate.

Since then, any major curriculum reform in Germany has been preceeded by a comparable arrangement in which the general public has had access to arenas of general deliberation on educational politics, but has been kept away from the process of curriculum development in specialized commissions. Sometimes a complex organization was needed, sometimes a simple splitting of discourse levels by establishing paralell or subsequent commissions on planning principles (open to the public) and on the curriculum itself (as a closed shop) was sufficient. However, all attempts to proceed without such a discourse segmentation failed (as most of the curriculum projects in the years around 1970; cf. Haft & Hopmann 1987b).

II. Current Structures of Curriculum Making

Since 1949, more than seven thousand separate syllabi have been issued for general education alone in the Federal Republic of Germany. This moderate estimation is based on the current number of syllabi in the eleven states of the former Federal Republic combined with the average period of validity. A future Germany with sixteen states will have around two thousand different

syllabi in general education plus at least twice that number of curricular guidelines in the various areas of special and compulsory vocational education.

These rather large numbers are due to three basic fundamentals of compartmentalization in the current system of curriculum making:

- No syllabus is valid in more than one state. Each state issues own syllabi. Only in a few areas (as e.g. the final examinations in secondary education) do guidelines exist at the federal level, however, to be valid, these have to be adopted in the state syllabi as well.

- No syllabus covers more than one subject. At the primary level, the timetable covers at least eight, in upper secondary education normally more than twenty different subject matters. All in all there are more than fifty different subject matters represented in general and special education alone.

- As a rule, no syllabus covers more than one of the different school types or levels, sometimes even less, covering only one grade of a school type or level, or a distinct course of study.[5]

As a result, any nation-wide compulsory subject matter is laid down in at least as many syllabi as there are states in the Federal Republic. Several subjects, as mathematics or English, are covered in more than fifty syllabi. Others, like Danish or Astronomy, may have just one or two written editions, because they are introduced in not more than one or two federal states and at not more than one or two school types. However, following the history of curriculum policy making as outlined above, the different syllabi are made within almost identical structures of curriculum development.

II.1 Basics of Curriculum Administration

It is still the same old story: Following an officially guided deliberation process on educational policy in general or on principles of curriculum making in a distinct area, the ministry of education or its administration appoints commissions to produce a draft of the new syllabus. The proposed draft version

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[5] Thereby one has to take into account that the German school system is traditionally divided into four or five areas at the secondary level: the Hauptschule and the Realschule, both providing lower secondary education, the Gymnasium, leading to university access, and, since 1968 in but a few areas, the Comprehensive School as a combination of Hauptschule, Realschule and Gymnasium. Moreover, we have the Sonderschule, a subdivided system of special education institutions not only for those having a physical handicap, but also reaching out for all those who could not stand the ways and means of the other school types. Additionally, we have a dozen or so different types of compulsory vocational schools, several of these subdivided into various branches.

is subject to a hearing or a limited call for comments and minor administrative tuning. After one or two years of practical testing, the new syllabus is enacted:

a simplified chronological order of a curriculum change:

preliminary deliberation by administration & the public	-> installment of a commission by administration	-> draft production by commissions	-> (public) comments by professionals & the public	-> implementation by administration

Nowadays this process takes five to six years on average, around fifteen thousand working hours of the members of an average commission of seven. At least ten organizations will have commented upon the draft version before it is enacted, and the involved agencies from parliamentary committess to INSET-institutes will have produced a number of related papers and activities. A cautious estimation would be that in the eleven states of the former Federal Republic permanently between four and five thousand people spend a considerable amount of their working hours with curriculum development. A count including all steps of preparation and implementation would at least double this number.[6]

What keeps them all so busy? If one asks the members of curriculum commissions, all important motives to redraft a curriculum stem from inside school. Changes in time-tables, practical experience, school subject bound current topics or simply the age of the preceeding syllabus create the need for a new one. On the other hand, in public and in curriculum research it is usual to point to social, cultural or technical change as the main causes which set off curriculum reform. Both arguments are misleading. At least the frequency of change depends neither on practical nor social change, school events nor subject matter. In fact, there is no significant variation in the frequency of change between different types of syllabi. A syllabus concerning technology in secondary education is no more and no less subject to change than a syllabus concerning mathematics in primary or Greek in upper secondary educa-

[6] The system is as confusing as it sounds. Having co-edited the first comprehensive register of syllabi in the area of general education in the Federal Republic (Haft, Hopmann, Riquarts & Waldow 1986ff.), I experienced many times that not even the responsible administrations are always able to check out which syllabi are currently valid in their state. It took more than two years to compile the first edition.

tion. On average a syllabus is changed every six to seven years without regard to politics and policies, state, subject matter, school type and level.

There are but two organizational patterns of change. The most important one is the consecution of school types or levels. With respect to the limited political as well as economical capacities of administrations and their curriculum agencies, the least expensive technique is to redraft all curricula of one school type or one subject matter at the same time. Normally, there is no specific order in the sequence, but sometimes attention is directed by the second pattern: Depending on public deliberation or national regulation (concerning e.g. the value of certificates) some areas are at a given moment more in focus than others. Except for completely new subject areas (as e.g. computer science) this does not affect the average frequency of change, but may have an impact on the probability that a certain school type or subject matter is apt to change at a certain point in time. Whereas curriculum development in the first pattern usually is preceded by commissions on principles of curriculum change, the second pattern is in most cases combined with events of general educational policy deliberation. Both kinds of preliminary deliberation may lead to documents of general concern about issues and strategies in curriculum making. But whatever may result, it has no other empirically proven impact on curriculum development except relieving curriculum administration from public intervention or political pressure and preparing the administration itself to focus attention and resources on curriulum matters.

Nevertheless, as soon as the preliminary arrangement is finished, a commission is appointed and given the task of creating a draft version of the new syllabus. Leaving aside a few exceptions, all committee members are selected by the respective state ministry or department of education alone. Following the appointment, the administration formally hardly intervenes in the work of the committees. The only thing that is fixed in advance is general rules of conduct and those preliminary statements of curriculum policy which have been subject to a preceding arrangement. Neither rules nor statements play a significant role in the practical work inside the commissions except under unusual political premises (e.g. unexpected public attention towards citizenship education in an election year) or in exceptional organizational designs (with intervening supervision etc.; valued from the perspective of the draft committee members, all respective models failed to produce more than mutual embarrassment and competence twilight). However, staff members of the state administration or its curriculum agency (the so called state institutes) exercise a

strong influence in case of their personal membership or as compulsory consultants of "their" commissions.

As soon as the commissions have finished their work, they submit their draft version to the appointing ministry or department. Depending on the state and the issue, the administration or its agency now have to call for comments of a selected group of organizations and official committees, to check whether the draft fits in the compartmentalized system of regulation, to take care of related INSET-courses and other information policies, and to arrange dissemination and implementation. In most cases, these activities do not have a proveable impact on the final wording of a syllabus. All in all, more than minor alterations of the draft version compared to the enacted one were reported in less than seven percent of all studied cases. As said before, the whole process takes approximately five to six years. Taking into account that a syllabus normally is valid on an average seven years that means that we have practically reached a status of permanent reform. The syllabus is never finished, but recently changed, under probation, just implemented, not yet evaluated, prone to be changed soon, under preparation, and so forth without end.

II.2 Working Routines

Apart from the administration, the utmost influence on the written syllabus lies with the members of the curriculum commissions. They are responsible for the wording of the draft version. In the educational debates of the 60's and 70's, a point of great contention was the role of teachers in these committees. Following a first survey (made by Hans-Dieter Haller in 1973), it was critizised that more than half of the members of the curriculum commissions were teachers or principles. However, our second survey of the composition of commissions made in 1984/86 showed that the number of teachers and other school practitioners was not reduced, but had increased from 55 to an impressing 77 percent.

Moreover,

- almost all of the other members had been teachers before their present position or had at least completed teacher education;
- almost all committee members had practical teaching experience made at the school type or level being covered;
- four out of five members had studied, the others at least instructed the subject matter being covered;

Main Occupations of Commission Members (approx. %)

	(HALLER 1973)	(SURVEY 1980-85)
School	55	77
Teacher Training	11	5
State Institutes	--	7
Administration	10	6
Universities	13	3
Other	7	1
No response	3	1

- three quarters had been involved in teacher education or INSET-training;
- three out of five had been members of at least one other curriculum commission;
- every second member had published instructional materials, textbooks or the like;
- and - probably the worst side of that homogenity - less than 2.5 percent had had any vocational experience outside the educational field and that number included mainly those in the area of religious instruction who had held ecclesiastical positions.

The greatest reductions have been among those coming from academic institutions or from professions outside the educational field (listed as "other"). Curriculum researchers, for instance, the favorite branch of the seventies, have lost their place in almost all committees. A small portion of counseling is left in the case of newly established subject matter. Besides that, scientific curriculum development is reduced to a position comparable to any other proposal coming from outside school; it needs adoption by ordinary teachers to find access to the syllabus. Even worse is the situation of non-educational professions. Apart from the ecclesiastical positions already mentioned they have simply vanished.[7]

According to the rules of segmented deliberation, personal access to curriculum commissions is thus given educational professsionals only. And when asked, which criteria might affect their decison making, they point to their

[7] The decrease in the share of administrative staff has to be seen from another perspective. It is more than compensated for by the increase in the number of representatives of state institutes, which have been established since 1970. With a different status, these institutes have assumed the function of a partly scientific, partly administrative INSET and curriculum agency. Remaining a part of curriculum administration, they are placed outside its normal channels of decision making to allow for an additional buffer against public or political intervention (cg. Haft & Hopmann 1987b).

own professional knowledge and their experience as teachers or former teachers. However, the professional standard of deliberation inside the commissions should not be overestimated. The committees are expected to deliver a kind of practical reasoning within the given limits of schooling and not a scientific evaluation. Probably, this practical reasoning matches the logic of public curriculum construction better than any other strategy (cf. Künzli 1986, 1988). The subsequent pattern of content-choice by curriculum committees is shaped by two factors: successful tradition and negative coordination. Based on practical reasoning, whatever has proved to be useful tradition in everyday schooling has a fair chance to be included in the curriculum. In an administrative context, however, this is so only if it passes the test of negative coordination as well which takes care that any given content has no visible impact on other areas. Both reasoning and coordination act in a particular direction: Anything exceeding the traditional limits of its compartment gets excluded, but inside the compartments it is possible to enact ideas which would be unacceptable on a more encompassing level. A curriculum commission has e.g. to take into account what is traditionally asked by other syllabi of this grade or level; acceptable is only what can be done without risking the acknowledged relations to other subject matter traditions.

As a result, the margin of change included in an average syllabus is not very impressive. One should not expect more than incremental steps, which do not require considerable changes in any conventional instruction. At best, it is possible that a syllabus opens a door to future change by leaving more space to local decision making than given anyway and by featuring ideas about what could be changed. But - as a special survey in my home state indicated[8] - most committee members do not have very much trust in the willingness of their colleagues to follow anything new. Thus, rather than introducing new contents, a syllabus indicates that something has become tradition.

Taking care of these limits of deliberation and decision making is a necessary precondition of licensing (cf. I.2) and, at the same time, a most powerful limit to any particular curriculum construction. Accordingly, fundamental ends of

[8] We were not allowed to publish this or other data aggregated on state level in detail, because some of the respective state administrations feared that any comparative use made of these data could damage the reputation and legitimation of their proceedings (cf. Haft, Hopmann et al. 1986). The official argument was, however, that the protection of personal data prohibted any publication. At the same time the same administrations required us to provide them informally with as much data about their own state as possible - as "internal assessment" measures.

curriculum making are no issue inside the commissions.[9] Oddly enough, even a well-known German professor in education, author of several pieces dealing with the blending of politics, moral and education, wrote in his statement as committee member that politics had to be left out, because pedagogics were at stake.

II.3 Segmented Deliberation

The curious differentiation between politics and education is not just a theoretical viewpoint but a basic of the current structures. In the historical run, the political part of curriculum deliberation has been outplaced and strictly separated from curriculum development in commissions. Increasing since the late 19th century, this differentiation has been legally fixed in some of the German states since the 1970's.

Organized deliberation normally takes place in two areas of curriculum making: during the preparation of a coming curriculum change and, to a lesser extent, as a critical evaluation of the syllabus before it is enacted. However, a survey of all organizations, that had been officially involved in at least one state between 1980 and 1985, showed that - other than the work of commissions - this area of curriculum making is not organized in an uniform pattern. Parents and students, employers and unions, churches and political parties, organizations and associations of every kind want to be involved in curriculum making. Who is asked to take part in which section differs considerably.

One may speculate what might be the reason for these differences. To rebuff the traditional argument in advance: those differences have nothing to do with party politics. These have no proveable impact at all on structures of educational policy making. However, it was just as little possible to single out

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[9] They are not simply left aside, but repressed in a psychologically illuminating manner. As commission members relate the need for change (in spite of the facts) to reasons from inside school only, social, political, cultural etc. motives do not play a significant role in their curriculum reasoning. Asked, whether - at least - the educational concepts in their commissions were uniform, most committee members agree. However, a comparison of the personal wording of their concepts often reveals that they do not have much in common. But also that the committee members are not aware of this fact. Im my survey I had examples where all members of a committee declared to be in agreement and none had but one argument of the others in his own concept. A common experience reported was that as soon as fundamental issues were touched upon, annoyance took place. Everyone had to act as if there was a consensus and any issue disturbing this feeling had to be excluded.

another decisive factor which shapes the size and level of involvement under any circumstances. The only consistent phenomenon was that participation creates more participation. In other words: There are states with a tradition of organizational involvement and others with none, and both normally stick to their tradition. The expansion of involvement in all states in recent decades has not reduced these differences. Moreover, the participation of teacher associations is a reliable predictor of general involvement. Where teacher associations have had a share in curriculum deliberation, all other organizations follow straight off.

Among the other factors which shape the size and level of participation in organized public deliberation were:

- legal guarantees: The easiest access to public curriculum bargaining is given to those whose right to intervene is guaranteed by constitution or law. Outstanding examples are the churches in the area of religious instruction and the parents in some areas of special concern like sex education.

- acknowledged tradition: Many organizations have an informal right to participate simply because they have always taken part and nobody dares risk the quarrel which might arise if they were excluded. That is especially true of otherwise not very important associations with an outstanding history in curriculum making like the Gesellschaft der Naturforscher und Ärzte (a once famous science society).

- vertical cooperation: Organizations cooperate with others which have access to other areas of curriculum deliberation, e.g. - to name the most common coalition - with a parent organization, a political party and a teacher union.

- public noise: The simple but empirically proven message is that the more noise an organization can make in newspapers and other media, in parliaments and meetings, the more administration has to react in public (symbolically at least).

- personal relationship: In many cases personal relations between committee or staff members and leading members of social organizations are the main route to participation. In most cases that relationship was based on fellow membership (e.g. the members of the curriculum committee were at the same time members of the respective subject matter association or of a teacher union).

- Subject matter competence: Organizations without a special reputation in the field covered by a syllabus are never represented inside commissions; even socially weak organizations with no stake in the offical deliberation process are most influential involved because of their subject matter bound reputation. Outstanding examples are subject matter groups like the associations of history teachers or of science teachers.

It is important to note that the degree of official involvement has nothing to do with the degree of practical impact on curriculum wording. An organization with a strong foothold in curriculum deliberation may be less influential than

another one with no visible involvement at all.[10] Moreover, according to the structure of the segemented discourse, organized participation has an influence on the preceding formulation of educational principles and in those areas which have been excluded from the curriculum development inside the commissions, but - as said before - thereby almost no proveable influence on the curriculum wording inside the commissions. Both are just different worlds of deliberation.

II.4 Impact on Instruction

The segmented structure of organized public deliberation is complemented by the licensing principle. Probably the worst a German teacher can imagine is that, except for examinations, others may have the right to control instruction "life", thereby destroying the iron curtain which normally keeps instruction out of public as well as professional scrutiny. The limit of a teacher's freedom behind this >iron curtain< is not set by the syllabus alone. Even more important are other regulations, which had been a part of the syllabus in the beginning, but have been relocated in special compartments since then. This second level of curriculum control is made by school legislation, by examination rules, through licensing of school books and other instructional materials, in short: by different means which do not affect the content-choice by the syllabus itself, but have an impact on the leeway left.[11]

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[10] In our survey an impressing example was the different emphasis of participation showed by employer organizations and the unions. Trade Unions are active in almost all areas of curriculum making being present in parliaments and public hearings about educational policies as well as being represented by members of teacher unions inside the committees. Employer associations, on the other hand, show almost no activity in curriculum development and the subject matter area and confine themselves to statements of general concern about educational needs. Officially, they do not have resources enough to engage themselves in such complicated matters not being familiar to them. In fact, they simply do not have to: Being the ones who decide about the value of school certificates in the long run, they can normally expect that none of their fundamental interests will be pushed aside.

[11] To give an example: A rather open curriculum laid down in a syllabus may in fact enforce a certain course of study if the only allowed and necessary textbook has an unconditional order of instruction; on the other hand, a very restrictive part of a curriculum may in fact go unnoticed because there are no other means to enforce its use. Normally, the second level of curriculum control does not visibly exceed a limit which could undermine licensing.

The relevant data we have in the Federal Republic about syllabus implementation at the classroom level (cf. sumarizing Baumert 1980; Axnix 1983; Grimmer 1983; Kunert 1983; Haenisch 1982, 1985; Gaebe 1985; Hopmann 1988) fit into this framework:

- The degree of loyalty to the prescribed syllabus varies between thirty and ninety percent depending on the subject matter instructed. For example, instruction in mathematics or foreign languages more probably follows the given guidelines than that concerning music, the arts or physical education. The degree of loyalty depends directly on the inherent (scientific) structure of the content taught and indirectly on the second level of curriculum control as described above: Subject matters, in which school books and other second level means have a strong tradition, are instructed more loyally to the syllabus than others.

- The degree of novelty a subject matter has affects directly the knowledge and use of the written curriculum. In traditional subject matters it is less likely that someone has taken a look into the syllabus than in new ones like information science.

- The age and the degree of professional experience of the teacher has a corresponding impact: The more experienced a teacher is, the less acquainted he or she is to the latest edition of the syllabus.

- Written syllabi are used by teachers to make plans for a year but not for a week, let alone a single lesson. This corresponds to their own planning perspective and its inherent principle asking for general loyalty and not for obdience to any detail, as well as to the fact that, normally, the annual but not the daily planning of a teacher may be subject to arguments with others and to administrative control.

- Finally, at the local level, syllabi are studied in cases of innovation or contention, but not in cases of tradition or of consent. This use in spite of their own logic of construction is a consequence of the overall design of syllabi within our pattern. Following the licensing principle, the educational administration has to act as if the given guidelines are locally enacted until proven otherwise. Accordingly, where there is neither innovation nor contention, there is no need to take care of the curriculum, because there is nothing to settle. Therefore, it was no surprise that none of the studies about constraints of instruction reports significant numbers of teachers feeling bothered by curriculum prescriptions.

All in all: to talk about an impact of syllabi at the classroom level is misleading. In our sytem of curriculum making, as Wilhelm Rein already observed at the end of the 19th century, syllabi are normally not ahead of, but behind everyday experience. As summaries of successful traditions their impact lies in the fact that they reinforce what is prevailing anyway.

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